

October 7, 2002

To: Municipal Officials, Code Enforcements Officers, and Local Plumbing Inspectors

From: Richard Green, Small Community Grant Coordinator

Subject: **INVITATION TO APPLY FOR SEPTIC SYSTEM REPLACEMENT GRANT**

Enclosed is a grant application and information pertaining to the DEP Small Community Grant Program. If the November Bond Issue is approved by the voters, grants will be available next year to assist low and moderate income property owners in correcting malfunctioning septic systems which pollute waterbodies or cause a public nuisance. The grant program can pay from 25% to 100% of the cost for qualifying problems. Grants must be applied for and awarded to the municipality (or county for unorganized territory), and must contain specific information on the problems identified. This information may be provided on the enclosed "Discharge Survey Field Report," or a DEP Inspection report if available. The deadline for applying is January 31, 2003.

The 2003 priority list showing successful grant recipients and grant amounts will be developed during the spring of 2003 and grant offers will be sent after the list is approved by the Board of Environmental Protection in April or May

Further information on this program may be obtained from the local Department of Environmental Office in your region, or from Richard Green at 287-7765. The FAX number is 287-7191 and email is richard.a.green@state.me.us.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Green
Small Community Grant Coordinator
Division of Engineering and Technical Assistance
Bureau of Land and Water Quality

Maine Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Engineering and Technical Assistance
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME 0433-0017

THE SMALL COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

The Small Community Grant Program was originally established by the 110th Legislature to address small but serious pollution problems caused by improper disposal of wastewater. Traditional funding sources available to finance large municipally owned wastewater treatment facilities in the urban areas of the state were not suitable for small and sometimes scattered projects which were needed in rural areas. The Small Community Program can help towns solve pollution problems by providing technical assistance and grant funding for individual or cluster wastewater disposal systems.

Only problems which are directly or indirectly discharging sewage to a water body of the state, or causing a public health problem, are eligible for grant assistance. Malfunctions contained wholly within the owner's property do not qualify for assistance, nor do systems which have not malfunctioned. The program can provide funding for either municipally or privately owned projects, but grants are offered to and administered by the municipality or the county commissioners in unorganized territory. The maximum project size which can be funded in any single year is \$100,000. Publicly owned facilities serving multiple users whose operationing costs are paid through user fees are eligible for 90% funding. For privately owned residential and commercial properties the grant percentage is determined based on income according to the following table. Systems serving schools, municipal buildings, non-profit organizations, and similar oranzations may be funded at the same level as commercial establishments.

ANNUAL INCOME	SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING	SEASONAL DWELLING
\$0 TO \$5,000	100%	50%
\$5,001 TO \$20,000	90%	50%
\$20,001 TO \$30,000	50%	25%
\$30,001 TO \$40,000	25%	25%
\$40,001 OR MORE	0%	0%

Annual income means the sum of all the property owner's Federal Taxable Income for the previous year for single family or seasonal dwellings.

ANNUAL INCOME	COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENT
\$0 TO \$50,000	50%
\$50,001 TO \$100,000	25%

Annual income means the property owner's Gross Profit Income for the previous year for commercial prperties. Non-profit and municipally owned buildings such as town offices and schools are subject to the percentages used for commercial properties.

Grant applications are accepted until January 31 of each year and a priority list is then developed which allocates the grant awards. The following priorities are used to rate grant applications:

1. Elimination of discharges to public drinking water supplies
2. Elimination of discharges to shellfishing areas
3. Elimination of discharges to nonshellfishing waters
4. Elimination of public nuisance conditions

Applications for emergency situations may be accepted after the application deadline. Emergency funding may be used for severe cases which occur after and deadline and must be corrected immediately. Emergency funding is limited to available funds, and may not be available.

For further information please contact:

Richard Green
Maine Department of Emvironmental Protection
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0017
(207)287-7765

Email richard.a.green@state.me.us

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE GRANT APPLICATION

Only one application form should be completed, covering one or more individual systems. A separate description of each individual problem should be included in the project justification. Applications will be evaluated based on the priority rating, number of problems documented, the amount requested, and available funding. The amount awarded may differ from the requested amount.

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Please provide all the information requested, including the employer ID number. This information is needed in order to offer a grant to the town.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section should contain a detailed description of the proposed project. It should include the number of individual septic systems to be constructed or itemization of the components of the project. If available, a cost estimate prepared by a site evaluator or engineer should be included.

3. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

For individual systems include the property owner name, address, tax map & lot number, priority type, and waterbody affected. Priority types are:

DW: Protection of Public Drinking Water Supplies
SF: Protection of Shellfishing Areas
WQ: Protection of Surface or Ground Water Quality
NU: Public nuisance conditions

In addition, a copy of a USGS topographical map must be included with the application showing the precise location of the problems identified. A discharge survey field report may be included with additional information about the property.

4. GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED

The amount requested should be estimated based on the project description.

5. SIGNATURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL

The name, title and signature must be included on the application.

6. SEND APPLICATION TO:

Richard A. Green
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0017



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
STATE HOUSE STATION 17 AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

SMALL COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

**APPLICATION FOR
GRANT FUNDING
2003**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

MUNICIPALITY:

COUNTY:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

EMPLOYER ID NO:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provide a detailed description of the project.

(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION(attach available documentation)*

Property Owner Name	Street	Tax Map & Lot	Priority Type	Waterbody Affected

***Include a USGS Quadrangle Map with each property location shown**

GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED

State Grant Funds requested:

(Basis for the requested amount must be provided)

\$

SIGNATURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL

TYPED OR PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

DATE

SIGNATURE

DISCHARGE SURVEY FIELD REPORT

Town: _____ Waterbody affected: _____

Surveyor: _____ Date: _____

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tax Map & Lot #: _____

Person Being Interviewed: _____

PROPERTY USE

Type of Building(Single family, multifamily, business, etc.) _____

Number of Occupants or Employees _____ Number of Bedrooms _____

Type of Water Supply _____ Wastewater Flowrate _____

WASTE DISPOSAL INFORMATION

Type of System: _____ Year installed _____

Type & Volume of septic tank _____

Frequency of septic tank pumping _____

Known problems _____

Attach a sketch showing the location of the house, well, septic system, waterbodies, etc. Include the wastewater disposal system plan, if available.

DISPOSAL SYSTEM INSPECTION

The following was observed during a visual inspection of the system:

- ☐ No apparent problem
- ☐ Ground soggy in area of system
- ☐ Surfacing wastewater remaining on property
- ☐ Surfacing wastewater leaving property
- ☐ Untreated wastewater entering drainageway or waterbody
- ☐ Other _____

DYE TEST RESULTS (IF DONE)

OTHER INFORMATION

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Small Community Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Topics:

- **What is the Small Community Grant Program?**
- **Who can apply for a small community grant?**
- **What types of wastewater disposal problems are eligible for grant assistance?**
- **What types of problems are not eligible for grant funding?**
- **What are the incomes limits for inclusion in the program?**
- **What costs are eligible for the grant?**
- **What costs are not eligible for the grant?**
- **How can I apply for a grant?**
- **My malfunctioning system needs to be fixed right away. Can it be funded immediately?**

What is the Small Community Grant Program?

The Small Community Grant Program is a water pollution control program administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The program may provide financial and technical assistance in solving wastewater disposal problems in unsewered areas. Grants for 25 to 100% of the replacement costs of a year round residence, 25% to 50% of a business, and 25% on a seasonal or second home are available for qualifying systems. Property owners benefiting from the grants must have a taxable income of \$40,000 or less, although technical assistance is available to anyone. The maximum project size which can be funded in a single year is \$100,000. The goal of the small community grant program is to improve water quality, protect public health, and open shellfishing areas which are affected by wastewater discharges.

Who can apply for a small community grant?

A municipality(a city or town government) may apply for a grant on behalf of residents who own property within the municipal limits. A quasi-municipal organization, such as a sewer district, may also apply for a grant for problems within the district boundaries. For unorganized territories, the county commissioners may apply for a grant. Individual property owners are not eligible to receive a grant directly, although the funding may be used to construct individual septic systems.

What types of wastewater disposal problems are eligible for grant assistance?

Discharges of untreated or partially treated sewage which flow into public drinking water supplies, shellfishing areas, or other waterbodies, or which cause a public health hazard, are eligible to receive assistance if the property owners meets the income qualifications.

What types of problems are not eligible for grant funding?

The program may not be used to construct septic systems for new homes or those which have changed ownership or been unoccupied during the previous year, or to replace or improve septic systems which are not malfunctioning and causing a public nuisance, or for buildings constructed or placed on the site after July 1, 1974 which did not install a system in compliance with the Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules. The grant program cannot pay back the cost of work done before a grant is awarded.

What are the incomes limits for inclusion in the program?

The grant program may be used to help fund small municipally owned and operated treatment facilities which collect user fees, or for privately owned septic systems. For municipal systems which collect user fees the grant percentage is 90%. For privately owned systems, income determines the grant percentage. For residences, income is the sum of all the owner's taxable income from the previous year. For commercial properties, the income limit is based on gross

profit. These are both specific lines on the federal income tax return. The percentage of the eligible costs that the grant can pay are based on the income information as follows:

ANNUAL INCOME	SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING	SEASONAL DWELLING
\$0 TO \$5,000	100%	50%
\$5,001 TO \$20,000	90%	50%
\$20,001 TO \$30,000	50%	25%
\$30,001 TO \$40,000	25%	25%
\$40,001 OR MORE	0%	0%

ANNUAL INCOME	COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS
\$0 TO \$50,000	50%
\$50,001 TO \$100,000	25%

What costs are eligible for the grant?

The grant will pay a percentage, based on the income limitations, of the following costs:

- Design
- Construction of replacement systems to serve the existing use of the property
- Administrative costs such as advertising for bids
- External plumbing to connect to the system
- External plumbing permits
- Recording fee for recording program easement
- Additional inspection fees beyond the requirements of the plumbing code

What costs are not eligible for the grant?

The grant will not pay for the following costs:

- Construction expenses incurred by the owner prior to department approval of an application for funding.
- Internal plumbing
- Easement or land acquisition costs.
- Excessive restoration or other costs beyond the minimum amount necessary to comply with the Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules.

How can I apply for a grant?

Grants may not be made directly to individuals. You need to contact your town officials (or county commissioners in unorganized areas) and ask them to apply for a grant on your behalf.

If the application is approved for funding and the bond issue that funds the program is approved, a grant will be available to the town during the next construction season.

My malfunctioning system needs to be fixed right away. Can it be funded immediately?

Emergency requests received from the town will be considered if funding is available. To qualify as an emergency a problem must be determined by DEP to present a severe immediate threat to public health which can't wait for future funding. Funding is extremely limited for this situation and may not be available.